

Message Text

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QUITO SAN SALVADOR PARIS GUATEMALA GEORGETOWN PORT AU PRINCE TEGUCIGA

LPA

KINGSTON MEXICO THE HAGUE MANAGUA PANAMA ASUNCION LIMA PORT OF SPAIN

LONDON MONTEVIDEO AND CARACAS 23 MAY 75

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 1741

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECLA

SUBJ: 16TH ECLA SESSION: ROUND-UP AND EVALUATION BY USDEL

1. SUMMARY: DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANTIVE ECONOMIC ISSUES, WHILE REITERATING LONG-STANDING DIFFERENCES AND RESULTING IN A NUMBER OF US NEGATIVE VOTES, WAS RELATIVELY NON-CONFRONTATIONAL IN TONE. MORE OUTRIGHT CONFRONTATION CAME ON THE QUESTION OF EXCLUDING US AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FROM SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF ECLA. IN THE COMING YEAR, SECRETARIAT WILL CARRY OUT US-PROPOSED STUDY WHICH WILL SEEK TO FIND COMPROMISE FORMULA ON INSTITUTIONAL
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QUESTION. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IGLESIAS PLAYED VIGOROUS, POSITIVE ROLE THROUGHOUT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SESSION FOCUSED ON TWO PRINCIPAL AREAS: THE

MID-TERM REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, WHICH BROUGHT PRINCIPAL SUBSTANTIVE ECONOMIC ISSUES TO THE FORE; AND PROPOSALS TO CREATE STANDING COMMITTEES OF ECLA, WHICH RAISED THE QUESTION OF EXCLUDING THE US AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FROM PARTICIPATION.

3. SUBSTANTIVE ECONOMIC ISSUES

IN THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IDS, THE SESSION CONSIDERED THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, A BODY CREATED FOUR YEARS AGO WHICH EXCLUDES THE US AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THE COMMITTEE BASED ITS REPORT UPON, BUT WENT CONSIDERABLY BEYOND, THE CAREFULLY DOCUMENTED STUDY PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT. WHILE THE REPORT CONTAINED VALUABLE ANALYSIS AND SELF-CRITICISM, AS WELL AS POSITIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR REGIONAL ACTION, ITS INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION CONTAINED MUCH THAT WAS CONTRARY TO US POLICY (FAMILIAR BASIC ISSUES OF THE NIEO AND CERDS). THE DOCUMENT WAS NOT CHANGED TO ANY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE DURING THE SESSION. THE US EXPRESSED ITS OPPOSITION IN FIRM BUT NON-POLEMIC TERMS. CANADA AND THE UK REGISTERED DISAGREEMENT WITH SEVERAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS, THE FRENCH AND DUTCH WITH A FEW, BUT THEY DID NOT REJECT THE REPORT, TREATING IT AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY POINT OF VIEW.

DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANTIVE ECONOMIC ISSUES TOOK PLACE IN A LARGELY NON-CONFRONTATIONAL ATMOSPHERE. MOST REFERENCES TO CERDS, MIEO, AND THE US TRADE ACT WERE MORE "PRO FORMA" THAN POLEMIC. TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS, ON THE OTHER HAND, GENERATED THE LIVELIEST STATEMENTS AND PROMISE TO DEMAND INCREASING ATTENTION.

SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN ADDITION TO THE US EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO AVOID FUTILE CONFRONTATION, CONTINUE WORKING TO NARROW DIFFERENCES, AND GET ON WITH CONCRETE ACTIONS. WHILE THE US STOOD VIRTUALLY ALONE IN A SERIES OF NEGATIVE VOTES (6 OUT OF A TOTAL OF 15 RESOLUTIONS), OUR OPPOSITION CONFIDENTIAL

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ON THE ISSUES WAS ALREADY WELL KNOWN AND SEEMED TO PROVOKE LITTLE SURPRISE OR RANCOR.

4. THE EXCLUSIVITY ISSUE

EXCLUSIVITY PROVED TO BE THE MOST CONFRONTATIONAL ISSUE AT THE SESSION. WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF EXSEC IGLESIAS, USDEL SPENT MUCH TIME AND EFFORT SEEKING ACCEPTABLE FORMULAS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF PROPOSED NEW COMMITTEES ON POPULATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION. WE AIMED FOR FLEXIBILITY WITHOUT SACRIFICING THE PRINCIPLE OF US RIGHT OF PARTICIPATION.

THE MEXICANS, ABLY ABETTED BY THE CUBANS, WERE THE RING-LEADERS FOR EXCLUSION. THE RENEGED ON CAREFULLY WORKED OUT COMPROMISES ON TWO OF THE PROPOSED COMMITTEES. THEY EVENTUALLY SECURED ADOPTION (OVER US OPPOSITION) OF A RESOLUTION WHICH, WHILE NOT ESTABLISHING NEW COMMITTEES, ASSIGNED FUNCTIONS IN THE THREE FIELD ON A PROVISIONAL BASIS TO THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, FROM WHICH THE US IS EXCLUDED. WHILE SEVERAL LATINIS DISAGREED, THEY WERE NOT WILLING TO BREAK RANKS IN PUBLIC. THE LATINIS DID RALLY, HOWEVER, ON THE LAST DAY TO DEFEAT MEXICAN ATTEMPTS TO DELETE THE PROVISIONAL NATURE OF THE ARRANGEMENT. THE ALSO PREVENTED MEXICO FROM AMENDING, IN WAYS UNACCEPTABLE TO US, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SECRETARIAT STUDY OF ECLA PROCEDURES AND MECHANISMS. THE LATTER, PROPOSED BY THE US, WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY IGLESIAS, WHO BELIEVES THAT IN A YEAR HE CAN WORK OUT AN ACCEPTABLE FORMULA.

THE EXCLUSIVELY CONCEPT HAS BEEN GAINING STEAM FOR FOUR YEARS. CLEARLY THE "REGIONAL" (I.E. LATIN/CARIBBEAN) MEMBERS BELIEVE IT IS TIME FOR CHANGES IN ECLA'S STRUCTURE, ALTHOUGH THEY DIFFER IN THEIR VIEWS OF WHAT THESE CHANGES SHOULD BE. SOME WANT THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES PRESENT ONLY AS OBSERVERS OR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS; OTHER WANT TO CONTINUE COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP AS IT IS, BUT WITH SOME EXCLUSIVE SUB-GROUPS. THE STUDY WILL BE OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF ECLA. IN THE VIEW OF USDEL, IT PROVIDES A USEFUL WAY FOR THE US TO HAVE AN INFLUENCE

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ON PROPOSED STRUCTURAL CHANGES AND MAY MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO AVOID A HEAD-ON COLLISION, WHICH OTHERWISE SEEMS INEVITABLE AT THE NEXT ECLA SESSION.

5. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IGLESIAS

AS THE NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, IGLESIAS PLAYED A VIGOROUS AND POSITIVE ROLE THROUGHOUT. WHILE THE SIGNIFICANCE WAS SOMEWHAT OBSCURED BY THE INSTITUTIONAL BATTLE, HE SUCCEEDED IN GIVING ECLA A MORE VIGOROUS ROLE IN THE "NEW FRONTIER" FIELDS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, FOOD, AND POPULATION. THE TWO PRINCIPAL INITIATIVES OF THE CONFERENCE WERE HIS -- A STUDY OF LATIN AMERICAN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE CREATION OF A "SAFETY NET", AND A LATIN AMERICAN FOOD CONFERENCE. HE HAS STAKED HIS LEADERSHIP OF ECLA ON BRINGING IT UP TO DATE WITH CURRENT REALITIES, GIVING "REGIONAL" MEMBERS A FORUM THAT THEY SEE AS THEIR OWN, WHILE MAINTAINING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE US AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. HIS IMPRINT ON THE INSTTIUTION ALREADY SHOWS.

6. TENOR OF THE SESSION

THE US ENCOURAGED THE NON-CONFRONTATIONAL APPROACH BY THE TONE OF ITS INTERVENTIONS, AND BY A SOLID, SUBSTANTIVE SPEECH IN GENERAL DEBATE DEALING FRANKLY AND CONCRETELY WITH THE PRINCIPAL ISSUES, ESPECIALLY COMMODITIES AND TRADE. ALSO IMPORTANT WAS OUR SUPPORT OF THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS STUDY AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO REACH REASONABLE COMPROMISES ON COMMITTEE STRUCTURE -- EVEN THOUGH THOSE COMPROMISES SUBSEQUENTLY FELL APART.

WHILE THE LATIN AND CARIBBEAN MEMBERS STATED THEIR VIEWS CLEARLY AND VIGOROUSLY, AND CERTAINLY DID NOT RECEDE FROM THEM ANY MORE THAN WE DID FROM OURS, MOST SEEMED TO WANT TO AVOID OUTRIGHT CONFRONTATION. THIS WAS EVIDENT BOTH ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND ON INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS. EVEN CUBA, WHICH HAD A LARGE AND ACTIVE DELEGATION, DID NOT FREQUENTLY PRESS POLEMICS WITH THE US. THE PAUCITY OF INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT OBSCURE CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FACT THAT WE ARE FUNDAMENTALLY AT ODDS ON NUMEROUS IMPORTANT ISSUES OF SUBSTANCE.

THE COUNTRIES THAT FORCED MEXICO TO RETREAT ON THE FINAL TWO INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES (PARA 4 ABOVE) WERE ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, AND ECUADOR. ALSO HELPFUL AT VARIOUS TIMES WERE CHILE, URUGUAY AND COSTA RICA. THE OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WERE MARGINALLY HELPFUL TO US BUT CONSIDERED THESE MATTERS PRIMARILY A US PROBLEM. PERHAPS MOST CONFRONTATIONAL, AFTER MEXICO AND CUBA, WAS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, FROM THE OPENING REMARKS OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL TO THE CLOSING ONES OF THE PRIME MINISTER. TWO OF PM WILLIAMS' INITIATIVES -- A LATIN AMERICAN "SURVEILLANCE" CENTER FOR TRANSNATIONALS AND AN EXCLUSIVE CARIBBEAN COMMITTEE -- ESCALATED THE RHETORIC AND PUT THE US IN OPPOSITION. AS HOYT COUNTRY, HOWEVER, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WAS IMPECCABLE IN ITS HOSPITALITY, AND SET A TONE OF FRIENDLINESS THAT GENERALLY MARKED THE MEETING.
BENNETT

UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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